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Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Seventy-eighth session

Summary record of the 2286th meeting
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 15 May 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Winter

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports of States parties (*continued*)

Combined fifth to seventh periodic reports of Angola (CRC/C/AGO/5-7; CRC/C/AGO/Q/5-7 and CRC/C/AGO/Q/5-7/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Angola took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola), introducing her country's report (CRC/C/AGO/5-7), said that the 2010 Constitution underpinned the fundamental rights of citizens, particularly children, and enshrined the general principles contained in the Convention such as equality and non-discrimination. It was also the basis for peace and democracy. Under the Constitution, in fact, elections had been held in 2012 and 2017. Since the sale of oil was the main source of national income, the country had seen a fall in revenues since 2014, which had affected the implementation of a number of social policies. Nonetheless, the new Government remained committed to protecting the human rights of all citizens, particularly the most vulnerable such as children, and continued its efforts to engage in dialogue with civil society, fight corruption and eradicate poverty. Services for children, such as birth registration, health care, education and access to clean drinking water, had separate funding lines within the General State Budget and, despite the reduction in resources, funding for the protection of children's rights had actually increased since 2014.

3. The report under review detailed the measures that had been introduced since the Committee had last issued concluding observations in respect of Angola, in 2010. It had been drafted by the Intersectoral Commission for the Preparation of National Reports on Human Rights, which brought together core national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights. The drafting process had also involved extensive consultation with civil society groups and United Nations agencies.

4. A number of laws with a bearing on children's rights had been passed since 2010. They included the Domestic Violence Act (Act No. 25/11), the Act on the Protection and Development of the Child (Act No. 25/12) and the Money Laundering Act (Act No. 3/14), which included provisions to protect women and children from human trafficking. In addition, Presidential Decree 235/14 had been issued providing for an interministerial commission to promote the social reintegration of trafficking victims. There had also been several developments on the institutional front. For example, the National Council for Children and the National Council for Persons with Disabilities had been merged to form the National Council for Social Action, which was responsible for promoting and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups such as children and older persons. The Ministry of Justice had become the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights and had been mandated to formulate and monitor human rights policies at the national level. Finally, a new ministry, the Ministry for Social Action, the Family and the Advancement of Women, had been formed by the merger of two existing ministries; it was responsible for drafting and implementing social policies to combat poverty and promote child welfare.

5. According to the Family Code, the minimum legal age for marriage was 18 although, under certain circumstances and with the consent of parents, guardians or the courts, boys could marry at 16 and girls at 15. As a participant in the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage, Angola was currently contemplating amendments to the Family Code and, in particular, reviewing the provisions related to marriageable age and how they were applied in customary law. The rights of children with disabilities were reflected in various pieces of specific legislation, including the Persons with Disabilities Act (Act No. 21/12), the Accessibility Act (Act No. 10/16) and Presidential Decree 207/14 on social intervention strategies for the inclusion of children with disabilities. Opportunities were made available for all children to make their voices heard with regard to policies, programmes and laws that affected them, and they were involved in the implementation of the 11 Commitments for Children.

6. The Government had taken steps to ensure that every child born in Angola was duly registered. To that end, it had increased the number of birth registration offices across the country, which now included 92 offices located directly inside hospital maternity wards.

Training on birth registration had been provided to hospital personnel such as technical and administrative staff, and midwives. In addition, campaigns to raise public awareness about the importance of birth registration had been carried out, particularly in remote areas, and legislation had been introduced waiving registration fees. Thanks to those efforts, more than 6 million persons had been registered.

7. In line with the constitutional provision that recognized the family as one of the fundamental pillars of society, the National Council of the Family had set up counselling centres throughout the country. Acts of violence against children were prohibited by law and combated through the National Strategy to Prevent and Fight Violence against Children. In the period 2015–2017, the National Institute of the Child had registered 239 abandoned children, all of whom had been accommodated, either within their own extended family, in foster families or in children's homes. At the national level, homes for children separated from their families housed a total of 6,712 minors. Adoption was regulated under the Family Code, and the Government had launched the process for acceding to the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

8. Considerable advances had been made in the field of health care. Neonatal and infant mortality rates had fallen sharply since 2000, and average life expectancy had increased from 48 years in 2009 to 60 in 2014. Those outcomes had been possible thanks to a public health service that included 3,034 facilities, from clinics to hospitals and from dispensaries to rehabilitation centres. In addition, extra funds for primary care had been allocated to municipalities, while integrated maternal and child health services, covering such areas as family planning, prenatal consultations, vaccinations, postnatal care and monitoring, and infant nutrition, had been put in place. The training of doctors had been upgraded and specialists were now available for consultation throughout the country. Early pregnancies had fallen, and the authorities were currently cooperating with national and international stakeholders to develop a strategy for the health of adolescents and young people. Nonetheless, and despite the fact that in 2015 Angola had been declared polio-free, certain challenges remained such as universal vaccination coverage and the continuing prevalence of moderate anaemia and chronic malnutrition.

9. In 2016, legislation had been enacted aimed at increasing the duration of free compulsory education to nine years from the current six. At the same time, the Government was developing a strategy to reduce school dropout rates, particularly among girls, and to eradicate illiteracy entirely by 2022. A 2015 education survey had led to the development of a national plan for the schooling of children from nomadic communities and ethnic minorities. Such children were also served by special programmes developed by the authorities in partnership with churches and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The National Special Education Policy for Inclusive Schooling catered for the educational requirements of nearly 27,000 children with disabilities, and there were 775 inclusive schools and 20 special schools, whose catchment areas covered 16 of the country's 18 provinces.

10. Statistics showed that the total number of children attending school had risen from 5.7 million in 2008 to 8.4 million in 2016 and that literacy rates among persons aged between 15 and 24 had climbed from 76 per cent in 2008 to 85.6 per cent in 2016. All school curricula included modules on human rights. The National Strategy for Education in Human Rights had been drawn up and was currently being examined by the Council of Ministers. Children born in Angola to persons with refugee status were entitled to access to public education on an equal footing with citizens.

11. The Government attached great importance to social development in general and remained committed to the comprehensive protection of children's rights. The minimum working age was 14, but children of that age who wished to work required the approval of their parents or guardians and could only be employed in the context of apprenticeships or training contracts. In line with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, special mechanisms for minors in conflict with the law had been set up within the country's 19 provincial courts. Appropriate support was provided for infants who resided in prison with their detained mothers. In addition, the authorities acted to, among other things, prevent violence against children at school, in the

family and in the community; encourage and support the development of preschool education; improve complaint systems; and expand recreational infrastructure.

12. The goals of the country's long-term development plan, Angola 2025, were gradually being achieved through the National Development Plans for 2013–2017 and 2018–2022. The main focus was to accelerate economic diversification with a view to safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable citizens, particularly children. Angola was a party or a signatory to most of the international human rights treaties and enjoyed excellent relations with the treaty bodies and special procedures mechanisms. In December 2017, it had presented its initial report on the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

13. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** (Coordinator, Country Task Force) said that the Committee recognized and appreciated the efforts made by the State party and the economic difficulties it was currently facing, which had arisen following a period of robust growth.

14. She wished to know if the Convention had ever been invoked before the courts, particularly in the light of the fact that, under the Constitution, international treaties took precedence over national laws in the domestic legal order. She remained concerned that the Act on the Protection and Development of the Child did not adequately cover such aspects as corporal punishment, child marriage and child labour, and she hoped that the delegation could inform the Committee of any initiatives to reform that Act and bring it into line with the Convention.

15. Notwithstanding the numerous plans and strategies mentioned in the State party's report, there did not appear to be any overarching strategy for the realization of the rights of the child. Given that, according to paragraph 17 of the report, the National Development Plan for 2013–2017 was "a fundamental factor for achieving human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular", she would welcome information on how children's rights were addressed in the plan or, as it had already expired, in any follow-up plan.

16. She wondered if the replacement of the National Council for Children by the National Council for Social Action might not affect the public perception of children's rights. Had the change lowered the profile of children's rights or had any impact on the coordination of action to implement the Convention?

17. She would appreciate details of the size and impact on children of the increase in expenditure mentioned by the head of delegation. In particular, she would like to know what steps were taken to allocate resources for children on the basis of vulnerability rather than number of children. Clearly, a small number of children in a given location might be more vulnerable and in greater need of assistance than a larger number of less vulnerable children elsewhere.

18. Corruption came at a cost to the State and thus affected all parts of society, including children. She wished to know what, precisely, was being done to combat corruption and, in particular, how many cases had reached the courts and what the outcome had been.

19. Neither the State party's report nor its written replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/AGO/Q/5-7/Add.1) contained any information on data collection. What steps was the State party taking to collect disaggregated data in all areas related to children's rights?

20. With regard to the lack of an independent monitoring mechanism, she would like to know if any progress had been made towards establishing a national human rights institution. Given that the Ombudsman could receive complaints submitted by children and complaints concerning children's rights, she wondered if children throughout the country enjoyed guaranteed access to the Ombudsman in full confidentiality.

21. She would appreciate receiving information on practical action taken to disseminate the Convention and the impact of such action on the promotion and protection of children's rights, including those of specific groups of children such as children with disabilities or those deprived of their liberty. Had teachers, judicial officers and others working with or for children received any specific training on the Convention?

22. Civil society participation was considered to be very important in the promotion and protection of human rights. How had civil society been involved in the preparation of the

State party's report and what was being done to make it easier for associations active in the field of economic, social and cultural rights to do their work freely?

23. In view of the strong presence of the oil and extractive industries in Angola, she wondered if the business sector was involved at all in the promotion and protection of children's rights, and if there were safeguards in place to prevent businesses from violating children's rights, for example for the purposes of economic exploitation. She would also like to know what was being done to safeguard the right of children to a healthy environment and to ensure that indigenous people had access to their lands.

24. The Committee had received reports that freedom of expression was limited in the State party. For example, at a protest by teachers and students at a teacher training college in Caluquembe, in April–May 2018, against the imposition of extra school fees of about US$ 30 a month, police had fired on protesters, wounding two of them. What was being done to resolve that dispute and ensure that any wrongdoing was punished?

25. With regard to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, there was a reference in paragraph 61 of the State party's report to "a commission that is working on analysing the religious phenomenon and the harmful practices of some religious sects and groups". She would be interested to learn what the outcome of the commission's analysis had been and what action had been taken to prevent such harmful practices from affecting children.

26. **Ms. Todorova** (Country Task Force) said that she would be interested to hear the rationale for having lower ages of majority in different pieces of national legislation. The lower minimum age for marriage set for girls amounted to gender discrimination; it was not clear whether the current review of the Family Code was looking into that issue. Moreover, it was reported that girls entered into de facto marriages even before they reached the age of 15. She wondered if there was any chance that the parental power to decide on early marriage would be abolished and the decision left to the courts. How feasible would it be for Angola to fix the minimum age for marriage at 18 for both girls and boys?

27. She would like to know if Angola had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which it had signed in 2013, and, if not, when it expected to do so. She would appreciate further information on the practical measures taken to prevent gender discrimination against girls in the family, at school and in access to justice and to change society's perception of gender roles and cultural stereotypes, as well as on measures taken to achieve sustainable equality for children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, children with HIV/AIDS, street children, San children and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children. She would be interested to learn more about any cultural practices that discriminated against children, in the field of inheritance for example.

28. She wished to commend the State party on establishing a legal basis for the application of the best interests of the child in family disputes that reached the courts. However, she was concerned about reports of long delays in the processing of such cases and would like to know what was being done to minimize those delays. The principle of the best interests of the child was not limited to such cases: it also applied to decisions in the areas of care, health, education, social protection, leisure, protection from violence and exploitation, and criminal justice. She therefore wished to hear whether guidelines were offered to teachers, doctors, social workers and anyone else working with children to help them determine the best interests of the child in a given situation.

29. The Committee agreed with the State party that the promotion of a culture of respect for the opinion of children was a complex task, but it also believed that the effective participation of children in decisions that affected them required safeguards to ensure that the child's views were accorded due weight, in accordance with the child's age and maturity. People who worked with children also needed training on how to help children express their views and how to prepare adults to listen to those views. The Committee would appreciate information on any steps taken to provide such safeguards and training. While the State party was to be commended on its established practice of listening to children caught up in family disputes before the courts, she wondered what happened when children's participation in school affairs or family matters came up against traditional attitudes that were at odds with such participation. Having heard that the National

Children's Forum had not been active recently, she would like to know how often the provincial and national assemblies of children took place, and which authority was responsible for organizing and following up on them.

30. According to the information made available to the Committee, the identity rights of Angolan children were in need of further legal safeguards. A child's access to a legal identity was a fundamental right. Failure to register and document a child's existence prevented the child's enjoyment of a wide range of human rights. The Committee therefore welcomed the Government's prioritization of mass registration campaigns to clear the backlog of unregistered children and its commitment to achieving universal registration. At the same time, it was concerned that the actual registration rate remained low, with only one in four children born during the mass registration period, and only one in two children aged between 5 and 14, having been registered. The Committee wished to know what strategy the State party had for achieving universal registration. Did it intend to link registration to vaccination campaigns or school enrolment, for example, or to invest in decentralized offices or mobile units? While she welcomed the move to do away with fees for birth certificates and identity documents, she would like to know if there were plans to issue birth certificates immediately after registration. Immediate registration after birth was clearly linked to the child's right to a name. The Committee was concerned about the persistent practice of giving a child a name chosen by consensus of the members of the child's extended family, which could take years. What measures were being taken to change that practice?

31. She would appreciate information on any developments regarding the decision to suspend the issuance of birth certificates to children born to foreigners, including the children of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, until a new nationality law had been adopted. Birth registration was essential to protect such children from statelessness. In that connection, she wished to know if there were legal avenues available to provide nationality to foreign children born in Angola who could not take the nationality of their parents. She would also like to hear what the procedure was for establishing the paternity of a child born to a single mother, and whether children who had been abandoned by their parents and family had access to information on their birth family.

32. The Committee welcomed the adoption of the Domestic Violence Act and the strategy and related plan to combat violence against children. However, corporal punishment was still not effectively prohibited in schools, day-care facilities, alternative care settings or penal institutions. The Committee was concerned that the concept of "justifiable correction" offered a legal defence for parents using corporal punishment to discipline their children. She wished to stress that the express prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings, and particularly in the home, was clear recognition of the child as a holder of rights. It would be interesting to learn how the Government intended to address societal issues raised by such a prohibition.

33. She would like to know more about the Government's measures for the prevention and early identification of neglect and sexual abuse of children in the family; data on the number of such cases prosecuted and abusers punished would be particularly helpful. She also wished to know how violence in closed settings such as care institutions was reported and investigated, whether teachers and doctors were trained to spot the signs of violence and sexual abuse, whether there were any specific measures to protect street children from violence, and what rehabilitation and reintegration services were available to victims. Details of the Government's experience in preventing violence through its various networks for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child would be welcome.

34. With regard to strengthening parenting skills, the Committee would appreciate more information on the mandate of the family counselling centres set up in each province and would like to know if those centres coordinated their work with the provincial units of the National Institute of the Child.

The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

35. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola), by way of an introduction to her delegation's replies to the questions raised by Committee members, said that the purpose of establishing the 11 Commitments for Children had been to ensure that children's rights were respected and to

engage all stakeholders in efforts to provide a consistent and sustainable response to the challenges faced in the realization of those rights.

36. The Government, working with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), churches, schools and communities, had disseminated the Convention widely, so that all citizens were now familiar with the principle of the best interests of the child. The various bodies responsible for implementing the 11 Commitments also took part in activities to disseminate and explain the Convention. As noted by Ms. Todorova, Angola had a system of networks for the promotion and protection of children's rights, which operated at the national, provincial, municipal and community levels. Those networks were active in identifying local problems and publicizing government policies on children.

37. All forms of child abuse were punishable by law in Angola and were considered socially unacceptable. Support, including psychosocial support, was provided for children whose rights had been violated or who had been abused. Where necessary, support was also provided for the victim's family.

38. With regard to the National Council for Social Action, "social action" was clearly a broad field. It had been decided, in the interests of efficiency and in order to make the best use of financial and human resources, to establish a single council to address the needs of a range of groups in need of special attention, such as women, older persons or persons with disabilities. Provincial-level meetings were held to monitor implementation of the rights of the child. Children held their own meetings for the same purpose and even conducted their own assessments of the implementation of the 11 Commitments by the competent State bodies.

39. **Mr. Malovoloneke** (Angola) said that the Government sought to create an inclusive society in which all Angolans were represented. To that end, it encouraged citizens, particularly children, to participate in the media. A training course would be held at the end of 2018 for children involved in producing media content, and all of the country's 27 national radio stations broadcast a 30-minute programme produced by children, for children.

40. The Ministry of Social Communication had collaborated with UNICEF on the establishment of a plan to raise awareness among media professionals of the rights of the child, including the right to privacy, and of standards for reporting on sensitive stories involving children. Journalists who infringed children's rights, for example, by failing to protect their identity, faced punishment under the law.

41. Social marketing campaigns aimed at children had been used to advertise immunization programmes. The strategy had been instrumental in the eradication of polio in the country, and similar campaigns had been launched to fight malaria and cholera.

42. **Ms. Izata** (Angola) said that a series of events, including elections, had delayed ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Ratification was expected before the end of 2019.

43. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that the provisions of international treaties could be directly invoked in any court. A series of rulings and decisions had been handed down in juvenile and family courts on the basis of provisions of the Convention, notably article 3, on the best interests of the child.

44. Birth registration was now free of charge for people of all ages, whereas before it had been free of charge only for children under 5. Campaigns had been conducted to encourage birth registration. The number of registration offices across the country would continue to be increased and the related procedures rendered less bureaucratic. Since not all babies were born in maternity wards, over 1,000 traditional midwives in remote communities had been trained to record births in ledgers issued to them; the entries were then transcribed into the official register. The problems posed by the practice of consulting the extended family before deciding on a child's name, which could delay or impede birth registration, were being tackled through an awareness-raising campaign. When mothers were registered as the sole parent of a child, the birth registration office conducted an investigation to establish paternity. Changes could be made to the register entry at any time by means of a court order.

45. The right of foreign citizens to receive birth certificates was guaranteed; however, registration did not confer Angolan nationality. Approximately 500 children of foreign nationals had been registered in the country. A law on nationality, enacted in 2016, provided Angolan nationality to children who were stateless or at risk of statelessness, and a 2017 law streamlined the administrative procedure through which refugees could obtain Angolan nationality.

46. The country was a party to various international conventions on combating corruption, and the issue was a priority for the Government. Measures taken thus far included the introduction of requirements for greater transparency in the banking sector, the establishment of a special investigation unit under the Attorney General and the creation of a new unit in the National Criminal Investigation Directorate. A number of corruption cases involving high-ranking officials were under investigation.

47. **Mr. Madi** asked how birth certificates issued by the authorities reached infants whose births had been recorded by midwives.

48. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that, in such cases, the certificate was sent to the mother.

49. **Ms. Skelton** asked whether it would be feasible to have birth registration offices at clinics where babies received postnatal care, such as immunizations, in order to give families time to decide on a name.

50. **Ms. Januário** (Angola) said that registration services were already available in clinics. Midwives registered births only in areas where no such services existed.

51. Law enforcement officers, members of the judiciary, health-care and social workers received training on the Convention. Awareness of the Convention and children's rights in general was raised through government-issued pamphlets and media campaigns. The Ombudsman received verbal or written complaints and had offices in five provinces. Mechanisms for settling disputes involving children were in place as an alternative to the court system.

52. The legal age of majority in Angola was 18. Exceptions in the Family Code that allowed marriage below that age, for example, were under review. Although campaigns were under way to combat both early marriage and pregnancy, those phenomena were rooted in cultural beliefs that were, to some extent, beyond the control of the State.

53. The age of criminal responsibility, as set out in the Criminal Code, was 16. The parliament had debated whether to change the age and a bill on the subject was expected in the near future. Employment law complied with the relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. The minimum age of employment was 14, but, in practice, few children sought to work at that age.

54. The Intersectoral Commission for the Preparation of National Reports on Human Rights allowed NGO representatives to participate in its meetings and invited them to take part in the drafting of reports. Over the previous two years, the number of NGOs had increased by 300. They went about their business freely and there were no obstacles to cooperation with them. In July 2017, the Constitutional Court had ruled that Presidential Decree 74/15, which imposed restrictions on civil society groups, violated the Constitution. The decree was therefore no longer in force.

55. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that the Government had established the Indicator System of the Angolan Child in order to capture progress towards the 11 Commitments for Children. It was currently analysing the forms of deprivation that affected children, in collaboration with the National Statistics Institute and UNICEF.

56. The new National Development Plan, which covered the period 2018–2022, included actions and activities in various sectors, to be implemented by actors at all levels of the State. An innovation was the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals into the Plan.

57. Vocational training programmes had been established for vulnerable children, including orphans and abandoned children. The Ministry of Public Administration,

Employment and Social Security was working with churches and other partners to provide targeted training to facilitate the entry of young people into the labour market. Those without job opportunities were encouraged to set up their own sustainable micro-businesses.

58. Increased decentralization would help to improve the situation of children by ensuring that the provision of health care and social services was organized by local government. The Government had committed to developing child-friendly schools and municipalities; that would enhance the promotion and protection of children's rights.

59. As Angola was a secular State, all religious institutions had to comply with national legislation. Compliance was monitored by the Ministry of Culture.

60. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** said that a systematized data-collection system was essential in order for UNICEF to analyse effectively the situation with respect to children's rights. Had the Government established, or discussed establishing, a national data-collection mechanism that would systematically gather and disaggregate data in all areas related to the rights of the child?

61. Regarding freedom of worship and religion, she wished to know how the case of the sect leader in Huambo, referred to in paragraph 61 of the State party's report, had been followed up and what the findings of the commission established to investigate the harmful practices of some religious sects had been.

62. **Ms. Mixinge** (Angola) said that her delegation would revert to some of the questions raised by Committee members at the following meeting. She wished to emphasize that urban and rural children were treated equally in Angola in line with national legislation. The child protection system involved actors from all sectors. Any children who considered their rights to have been violated, or who had been subjected to violence, could lodge a complaint with the police or the National Institute of the Child, which had monitoring and dispute settlement units. Once lodged, complaints were referred to specialized services.

63. **Ms. Todorova** said that she would appreciate further information about the mandate of family counselling centres. Did those centres coordinate with the provincial units of the National Institute of the Child? How many units and centres were there nationwide? What kind of professionals did they employ and how many? Given that the provincial units had forums for receiving complaints and claims from children regarding disputes with their parents, it would be helpful to know what the major areas of contention were and whether there were complaints of corporal punishment or other violence at home.

64. The State party had provided statistics in its report about the number of families it assisted. She wished to know how "assistance" was defined, what kinds of assistance were provided, whether the assistance available had been adjusted to reflect the growing child population and increasing urbanization, and if there were specific measures for single or young mothers. She would also like to know whether the gaps in the legislation on child maintenance had been brought to the attention of the Commission for Judicial and Legal Reform. Information on the prevalence of polygamy and of wife inheritance, whereby a man married his brother's widow, as well as on the impact of those practices on children, would also be welcome.

65. In view of the already high rates of parental negligence and parental abandonment, she wondered how the recent increase in the fertility rate had affected the separation of children from their parents and whether there were policies to address the underlying economic causes of separation. Had policies been adopted, for example, to promote employment for parents? In addition, she would appreciate clarification from the delegation of reports that the Committee had received concerning the impoverishment and internal displacement of many families as a result of eviction from their homes. Were those reports true?

66. She wished to know whether the Government collected data systematically on children deprived of the care of their biological parents owing to death of the parents, abandonment by the parents or removal of the children from the parents. What options were open to children temporarily or permanently deprived of parental care? How many children were cared for by their extended families, for example, and did legislation provide for the

appointment of guardians for children? She wondered if there was a systematic policy on alternative care, whether there were national standards on the quality of such care and who was responsible for monitoring quality. She would also like to know what procedure was followed when children were removed from their parents, and who was responsible for authorizing removal and determining whether it was in the child's best interests. The delegation should also explain why the Government had invested in institutional care rather than foster care, as had been recommended in the Committee's previous concluding observations (CRC/C/AGO/CO/2-4).

67. She wished to know whether there were data on the number of children available for adoption, legal criteria to establish whether a child could be adopted or a list of children available for adoption. Was there demand for adoption or any policy encouraging it? When would the State party accede to the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption?

68. Lastly, she wondered how many children had been separated from a parent owing to the parent's imprisonment. Were there measures to ensure regular contact between imprisoned parents and their children? How many young children remained with their mothers in prison and how did the Government guarantee the rights to education and leisure of such children?

69. **Mr. Rodríguez Reyes** (Country Task Force) said that he would appreciate information on the implementation of policies related to children with disabilities, specifically what had changed or improved. He wondered whether the Government collected data disaggregated by disability to help it design public policies tailored to specific disabilities. He would also like to know whether the existing programmes and policies covered children with disabilities nationwide, and whether the Government disseminated or provided training on the content of legislation related to children with disabilities. He would welcome figures on the number of children with disabilities who were in school. He would also be interested to hear about any policies to promote the social inclusion of children with disabilities in areas besides education. Were there policies to improve the accessibility of public transport, for example?

70. Regarding education, he wished to know what steps were being taken to increase school enrolment in rural areas and reduce dropout rates. Given the important role played by teachers in tackling school abandonment, he wondered what was being done to improve staff retention in rural schools.

71. In view of the State party's high rates of infant and maternal mortality and the link with poverty and poor nutrition, he would like to learn more about midwife training and the infant health programme implemented as part of the National Development Plan for 2013–2017. He also wished to know how the Government planned to ensure universal vaccination coverage and what measures were being taken to address the high rates of malaria in some areas.

72. He wondered what programmes or measures were in place to strengthen reproductive health care for adolescents, promote responsible parenting and facilitate access to contraceptives. He would be interested to hear whether the Government had considered revising the Criminal Code to decriminalize abortion, and how it would ensure that adolescents had access to safe abortions and post-abortion care. He would also like to know whether specific resources would be allocated, in the context of the national strategy to promote adolescent health, to inform adolescents about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, and how the strategy would be implemented in the short term. Regarding HIV, the State party should explain what was being done to ensure full access to antiretroviral treatment for people who needed it and to support pregnant women who had contracted HIV. Had the Government requested technical assistance from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) or UNICEF in that regard?

73. He would appreciate information on any measures to prevent drug use and any steps being taken to prohibit tobacco and alcohol advertising in the media. In addition, he wished to know what public policies were in place regarding children and adolescents who required mental health care. Did the Government prioritize hospitalization, medication or the

prevention of mental health problems? Were psychologists available to provide care to children in schools or communities?

74. He would like to know more about the Government's malnutrition strategy, particularly whether it was applied nationwide and whether it prioritized the nutrition of breastfeeding mothers and their children. He also wondered how the Government promoted early breastfeeding and how many Angolan hospitals were certified under the UNICEF baby-friendly hospital initiative. He would welcome information on the amount of maternity leave granted to women and compliance with the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).

75. **Ms. Ayoubi Idrissi** said that, although the Government had established a list of dangerous jobs, work in diamond mines was not explicitly prohibited for children, and although a labour inspectorate had been established, it was unable to fully address problems related to child labour in rural areas. What was being done to combat the economic exploitation of children, particularly their engagement in dangerous work, and how did the Government intend to strengthen the role of the labour inspectorate?

76. She was concerned to note that young people in conflict with the law were often deprived of their liberty and were held alongside adults in the country's two reintegration centres, which, moreover, were insufficiently resourced to meet the needs of children re-entering society. She wished to know what measures had been taken to improve the juvenile justice system, establish the use of deprivation of liberty as a last resort, promote non-custodial alternatives and rehabilitation, and increase the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18.

77. Despite institutional and legislative efforts to counter people smuggling and human trafficking, trafficking remained a problem, with South Africa, Namibia and Europe the main destinations. Trafficking within Angola also persisted and was rarely prosecuted owing to corruption. What measures was the Government taking to tackle the trafficking and smuggling of children, and ensure that cases were prosecuted? She would particularly appreciate information on extraterritorial jurisdiction, mutual legal assistance and rehabilitation mechanisms for victims.

78. **Ms. Aho Assouma** said that she wished to know what measures were in place to combat harmful traditional practices related to witchcraft and what provisions were contained in the Family Code in that regard. What was being done to protect children declared to be witches, who could be ill-treated, abused or even murdered?

79. She wondered how the Government prevented mother-to-child transmission of HIV and whether such measures were implemented nationwide. Information on relevant health-care training programmes in rural areas would be appreciated. She understood that some parts of the population drank water from wells and rivers. She would therefore welcome information about efforts to increase access to clean drinking water and reduce the risk of cholera. In view of the droughts and floods in the State party, she would like to know whether the Government had long-term plans to combat climate change.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.